



Oklahoma A+ Schools® is the state's only research-based whole school network with a mission of nurturing creative learners. Located on the campus of the University of Central Oklahoma, OK A+ provides schools with ongoing professional development, an intricate network of support, and an active research component conducted by university professors. Spanning the state and growing every year, this network represents every kind of school from early childhood through high school, in urban, suburban and rural Oklahoma.

The initiative was conceived in North Carolina where it began as a research model sponsored by the Kenan Institute for the Arts. In 1998, the Kirkpatrick Foundation provided support through the DaVinci Institute to identify the country's most successful education reform models. When a joint research team from the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University identified the North Carolina A+ Schools' Program as one with great potential for replication in Oklahoma, the initiative was born. Oklahoma A+ is also a member of the National Consortium of A+ Schools.

Schools commit to a set of eight A+ Essentials™ which they learn about during the initial Summer Institute and through the ongoing professional development provided by a highly qualified, innovative group of teachers, teaching artists and practicing artists known as A+ Fellows. The A+ Fellows, under the direction of the A+ Staff, help build the capacity of each school to collaboratively set and reach the goal of creating the schools they want for the children they love. A+ Schools build community-wide ownership of a school's collaboratively developed goals and objectives.

Leading the way, preparing Oklahoma youth with skills for the 21st century workplace, this system develops schools that encourage creativity, innovation, and critical thinking. The research results are clear. Systematic and creative use of the A+ Essentials leads to higher achievement, joyful, engaged students, teachers, and community, and more creative, focused instruction.

This public/private partner model is increasingly sought as collaborator in state, national and international initiatives, helping communities create the schools we need to prepare the children we love for continued leadership in the 21st century.

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